

dialogue

The Staff Newsletter of the Ministry of Community and Social Services

In this issue:

Workplace Accommodation and Safety	
Services organization chart	2
THEME PAGE: Workforce analysis from the Employment Systems Review	3
Fast Facts/Technology Tips: Auto Reply/People and Places	4

OPSEU and MCSS launch joint Employee Relations Committee training



Photo: Brian Finkel

Representatives from management and OPSEU who serve on our Ministry Employee Relations Committee are: (seated, left to right) Leah Casselman, Pam Smith, Dal Redmond, Janis Fraser and Margaret Weightman; standing, Deb Sonogo, Tom Wood, John Kirk and Peter Wilson. Not seen in the photo are committee members Ray Shuttleworth and Wynn Turner.

OPSEU and the ministry are launching a new joint training program for all members of Local Employee Relations Committees (LERCs) in MCSS. Presently, there are almost 50 LERCs in facilities, area offices and local offices across the ministry. The objectives of the two-day training program include:

- ▶ providing members of LERCs with an increased understanding of the purpose and roles of the ministry and OPSEU, and the philosophy behind the principles stated in their ERC memorandum of agreement;
- ▶ contributing to the development of increased skills for resolving problems successfully together;
- ▶ increasing members' mutual awareness and appreciation of the challenges faced by their union or management counterparts at the ERC tables.

Leah Casselman and Margaret

Weightman, co-chairs of the Ministry Employee Relations Committee (MERC) for OPSEU and MCSS respectively are enthusiastic about the new training program.

"These sessions are an important step in building strong working relationships between the ministry and OPSEU at the local level," says Margaret. Leah agrees, saying, "This will be an opportunity to build on the foundation of better labour relations that we've established at the MERC table over the past three years."

The training program was designed by Deborah Sonogo and Ray Shuttleworth, who are OPSEU members of the MERC, and by Tony Magee, the ministry's employee relations training co-ordinator. Work began on this project two years ago and was renewed in earnest this past winter. Deb, Ray and Tony developed case studies and other exercises to address topics

Continued on page 2

A model of compassionate care for children

By Julia Naczynski

How do you communicate with people who cannot speak? More important, how do they communicate with you?

At Hopewell Children's Homes near Guelph, staff and volunteers recently put themselves in the shoes, if not the wheelchairs, of the young residents in their care to become more aware of how to relate to the children.

Hopewell is funded by the ministry and provides high-quality care for up to nine children in a family-like environment. Almost all the children have profound physical and developmental disabilities; some are blind; most are medically fragile and have their nutritional needs met through gastrointestinal tube feedings. Most are also non-verbal.

But "behind all the handicaps, there's a whole person," says clinical director Joanne Oosterhuis, who operates the home with husband and executive director John and human resources director Elynn Peirson, as well as dedicated staff and volunteers.

Recently staff and volunteers took part in an "imaging" exercise to heighten their sensitivity to the residents' needs and wants, and to better understand how the residents express those needs.

Staff and volunteers were paired off. One person was given the "role" of an actual resident and directed to demonstrate a real-life situation—for example, the resident's desire for a walk or a drink, or to express sadness, or worry. The other person in the pair had to figure out what the "resident" was expressing or wanted; in some cases she also had to try to persuade the resident to do something, such as play a game or drink.



Photo: Julia Naczynski

In an imaging exercise, volunteer Cynthia Fleicher, seated in wheelchair, resists Hopewell staffer Ida Dejonge's attempts to soothe her.

Participants later agreed that it was as hard to communicate feelings and wants as a non-verbal person as it was to interpret those feelings and wants. Joanne emphasized that even though the children may have a limited scope of understanding and experience, it's important to be verbal and explain situations to them. The children also react well to cues such as tone of voice, smiling and other forms of encouragement, so it's important to demonstrate an up-beat attitude and make all interactions a happy and positive experience, she said.

The workshop was observed by Waterloo Area Office staff Clarence Wheaton, the licensing specialist who frequently visits Hopewell, and Judy Arnold, also with the Community Programs Unit.

Clarence says Hopewell is one of the finest examples of community care he has ever seen, and a model for other agencies

Continued on page 2

Ministry-funded agencies respond to community tragedy

By Debbie Mills

Several years ago it became apparent that there was a need in the district of Algoma for a tragic response team to assist communities in dealing with traumatic events that occur from time to time. Several events in Elliot Lake and the surrounding area, including several youth suicides, a tragic drowning of a young man and the death of a beloved teacher, led to the creation of the tragic response team, which includes representatives of such MCSS-

funded agencies as Algoma Child and Youth Services (ACYS), the Elliot Lake Family Life Center and the East Algoma Mental Health Clinic.

With the tragic response team concept, local social workers, psychologists and therapists provide opportunities for debriefing, referral for agency assistance, and general support to the target population, often young people, in times of traumatic stress and grief.

The people of Elliot Lake wore purple ribbons — Katie Lynn Brosseau's favourite colour — in memory of the little girl.

Recently, the tragic response team was enlisted once again to provide assistance to the community of Elliot Lake in the aftermath of the May death of two-year-old Katie Lynn Brosseau and that of her father, Richard Brosseau. Media representatives from all over the country converged on the small northern community as the tragedy

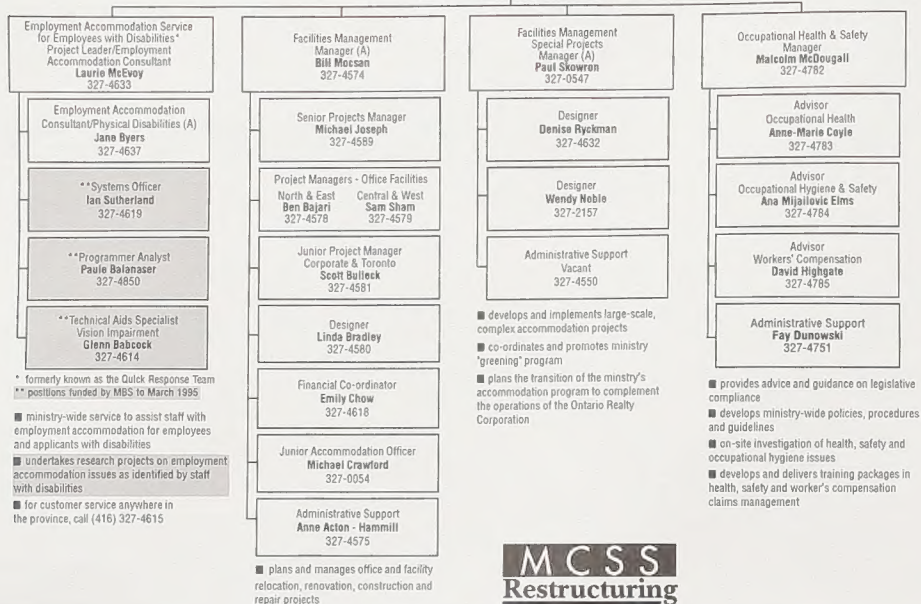
Continued on page 2



Workplace Accommodation and Safety Services (formerly Physical Workplace Programs)

Workplace Accommodation and Safety Services

Human Resources Branch - 30th floor, 2 Bloor Street West
Fax: (416) 327-0564



MCSS
Restructuring

Employee Relations training...

continued from page 1

including communication, joint problem-solving and conflict resolution. They believe this new training program is the most comprehensive one of its kind in the Ontario Public Service.

Deb, Tony and Leah will be delivering sessions across the province beginning after Labour Day. Schedules are now being prepared to ensure that members of all LERCs will be given an opportunity to participate in the training sessions between September 1994 and the end of March 1995.

A model of compassionate care

continued from page 1

to follow. "The level of compassion and caring is truly admirable," he says. "When you see an organization that does its job as well and effectively as this, you want other people to know about it."

Hopewell is located on RR #1 in Ariss, in a rural setting. If you're interested in learning more about their philosophy and programming, contact John, Joanne or Elynn at:

(519) 836-9641

Kim Knowles (at right) tries to engage the attention of Paula Wilkinson (in wheelchair) during imaging exercise; both are Hopewell staffers.



Responding to community tragedy...

continued from page 1

of the suicide-murder unfolded. Some asked how much more this community of 13,500 could take, and re-ran old footage of closed mines and stories about Elliot Lake's fight to survive massive unemployment (see *Dialogus*, Summer 1991).

The community came together in shock, aghast that such a tragedy could occur in Elliot Lake. People asked themselves if they could have done something to prevent the deaths. Children asked their parents questions that remain unanswered.

Tragic response team members provided

one-to-one counselling to members of the locally-organized search-and-rescue team wherever needed. Special counselling centers were set up in community agencies for anyone needing assistance.

Algoma Child and Youth Services provided an evening session for parents to help them deal with their children's fears. Psychometrist David Mascara from ACYS in Sault Ste. Marie was present to provide support, answer questions and give suggestions to parents who needed help responding to the needs of their own

children in the wake of Katie Lynn's death. Parents in attendance were genuinely concerned for the welfare of their young children, and David offered practical advice in the area of dealing with rumours and innuendo. Alan MacQuarrie, a local school social worker, described the evening as practical and worthwhile.

The Elliot Lake Family Life Center and East Algoma Mental Health Clinic have also been very visible in the community and continue to provide support to those who volunteered as searchers and others

affected by the tragedy. The team arranged a community meeting featuring Sudbury funeral director Gerry Loughheed, a renowned speaker on the topic of dealing with grief and healing. The event was well attended.

All agencies pledge to be available, as needed, to continue to assist the residents of Elliot Lake in coming to terms with their shock and loss.

Debbie Mills is a probation officer with MCSS in Elliot Lake.

A profile of the ministry's employees

by the Employment Systems Review Communications Working Group

An important component of the ongoing Employment Systems Review (ESR) is the "workforce analysis" — a "snapshot" of how MCSS looks in terms of the people who work here as it relates to employment equity. The results of this analysis establishes the profile of designated-group representation among ministry staff. This comprehensive analysis of our workforce has been completed by our ESR Task Force. The information comes from the voluntarily completed MCSS Workforce Profile surveys (the surveys on hand as of May 1992) and surveys of new hires during the period of May 1992 to June 1993.

Six measures of employment equity were identified to demonstrate the extent to which equity has been achieved in the ministry. These are:

- **Ministry representation** (profile of designated groups);
- **Occupational distribution** (average salary comparison);
- **Occupational segregation** (concentrations of groups);
- **Access to authority and decision-making** (senior management positions);
- **Job security** (classified and unclassified);

- **Hires and Exits** (profile of designated groups in the ministry's new hires and those who leave the ministry).

These six indicators measure whether designated groups are represented at a rate comparable to their availability in the local labour market, as well as how designated groups compare to non-designated employees using several factors. These comparison factors are: average salary, distribution across job classes and levels in each occupation; length of service; and representation in classified and unclassified service.

The MCSS workforce analysis illustrates that overall, designated groups are under-represented (with the exception of women with no other designation and francophones). In addition, the analysis has also shown an overall decline in the representation of the aboriginal/First Nations people and people with disabilities. Following are key findings from the workforce analysis, arranged under separate headings for each designated group to make it easier to see how each designated group fares at MCSS.

Common traits for all designated groups:

A SUMMARY

Within MCSS the workforce analysis shows that the designated groups are:

- under-represented in the ministry, except for francophones and women with no additional designation;
- significantly under-represented (except for francophones and women with no other designation) in the Senior Management Compensation Plan (MCP) and the internal "feeder" group to SMG-1 categories.

Aboriginal/First Nations peoples are:

- concentrated in the OAG category. Note that the Office Administration Group occupations offer the lowest salary range among all the occupations in the ministry, and upward movement from this group is very limited.
- not represented in the SMG 1, 2, 3 categories. Note that SMG positions offer the highest salary range in the ministry and have decision-making authority.
- not represented in the General Administration and Personnel Administration management group.
- concentrated in lower-paying management positions when they do achieve management level at all.
- earn the lowest average salary in the bargaining unit and excluded categories.

Persons with disabilities are:

- under-represented in management, bargaining unit, and excluded unclassified positions.
- significantly under-represented in SMG 1 and 2.
- significantly under-represented in new hires.
- concentrated in lower-paying management jobs and earn less on average management positions.
- earn the lowest average salary among unclassified positions.
- make up the second-oldest average age group.

Racial minorities are:

- concentrated in the Finance and Finance/Administrative Services occupational groups (which do not appear to be "feeder groups" to the senior management positions).
- under-represented in Social Program Administration and Program Analysis management groups, which are known to be "feeder" occupations to SMG positions.
- under-represented in SMG 1 and have no representation in SMG 2 and SMG 3 categories.
- significantly under-represented in new hires.
- the most senior workforce both in terms of length of service with the ministry and average age.
- Also, racial minorities who are women have the highest concentration in OAG positions.

Designated-group members:

- have limited access to positions with authority and decision-making, such as the SMG categories;
- have limited secondment, acting and underfill opportunities.

They also:

- make up a larger proportion of unclassified employees than non-designated employees; and
- earn less on average than non-designated employees.

Francophones are:

- well-represented in the ministry overall but are:
- under-represented at SMG 1 and 3 categories.
- not represented in unclassified management positions.
- earn less on average in management positions.
- the second-highest in concentration in the OAG categories.
- under-represented in sections of the southeast and north regions.

Women:

- Women with no other designation are significantly well represented in the ministry but are:
- skewed towards excluded and bargaining unit positions.
- under-represented in Comprehensive Audit and Investigations Branch, Information Services and Financial Administration, Senior Management Compensation Plan (MCP) and SMG 3.
- For women with no other designation this is matter of underrepresentation. But women with another designation (that is, women who are disabled, women who are a racial minority, women who are francophones or who are aboriginal), it is matter of zero (0) representation.

Also:

- a significant proportion of women are leaving the ministry.
- women are concentrated in unclassified management jobs with the lowest average salary.

Doubly-designated women (women who are disabled, francophone, etc.) are:

- significantly under-represented overall.
- have their highest concentration in OAG positions.
- have virtually no representation in SMG 2 and 3 categories.
- are provided limited secondment, acting and/or underfill opportunities.
- earning less than all other groups in the bargaining unit and excluded categories.
- earn less on average than men who are Aboriginal/First Nations persons, racial minorities and francophones.

About the analysis

This workforce analysis is important because it is the key quantitative measure and monitor for the implementation of employment equity. The information in the analysis serves three distinct purposes. First, it provides a profile of the designated groups by regions and by occupations; second, it measures the success or lack of success of employment equity plans and policies; third, it will refute or support claims made

about employment equity (e.g., the success or lack of success in implementing employment equity, beliefs in "reverse discrimination", and highlights problem areas).

The data, in and of itself, does not explain why patterns exist — solely that the patterns or barriers do exist. Other components of the ESR, such as the document review, staff interviews and focus groups, will help explain why the designated groups encounter these barriers.

The true indicator of successful implementation of employment equity is a

workforce profile in which all designated groups are represented at all levels and in all occupations in comparison to their availability in the labour market.

The analysis of the MCSS Workforce Profile Survey is an essential piece for the Employment Systems Review and is a mandatory requirement of pending employment equity legislation.

All new employees are asked to voluntarily complete this survey form when they join the ministry. These forms can also be completed by employees who wish to change or correct any previously-submitted

surveys. The authority to collect this information is through the Ontario Human Rights Code (1986). Your nearest contact, if you would like to complete a workforce profile survey or make an update, is your local Human Resources Unit.

The importance of the Workforce Profile Survey cannot be over-emphasized and contributes greatly to the development of Ontario Public Service employment equity programs.

Watch for more news about the ESR project in the next (September) issue of Dialogue.

Technology Tips

From Information Systems Branch

Vacation time is in full swing again! Have you ever noticed, especially during the summer, when you send electronic mail messages on your personal computer that you occasionally receive a message back from the addressee stating that they are on holiday? These messages usually inform you of the vacation time period and advise on who to contact if you require assistance during the absence.

You too can reduce wasted time and the frustration others may experience when

trying to contact you regarding urgent matters.

The Auto Reply option, selected from the Electronic Mail (EM) menu of All-in-1, will automatically reply to anyone sending you messages during your absence. When mail is received in your All-in-1 account, your personal Auto Reply message is automatically forwarded to the message originator.

The Auto Reply message will only be sent once to each person sending you mail even if the person sends multiple messages to you during your absence. Remember to cancel Auto Reply when you return to your office, because the message will continue to be sent out to your correspondents until you cancel it.

You can easily create these messages

yourself using ALL-in-1's Automatic Reply option under the Electronic Mail Advanced Messaging options menu. Follow the steps below or check in your All-in-1 Training Manual for instructions:

To Create a New Auto Reply:

1. From the Electronic Mail menu type **AR** and press **Return**;
2. Select **Create** option and press **Return**;
3. Complete the form with the appropriate Folder Name and Document Title and press **Return**, type your message and press **Gold F** to file the message;
4. The Auto Reply is activated and a message is displayed in the bottom left corner of your screen.

To Select an Existing Auto Reply Message:

1. From the Electronic Mail menu type **AR** and press **Return**;
2. Type **SEL** and press **Return**;
3. Complete the Select Reply Document form with the appropriate document folder name and title, and press **Return** — a message is displayed indicating that your Auto Reply message has been selected.

To Cancel An Auto Reply Message:

At the Electronic Messaging Menu, type **CR** (Cancel Reply) and press **Return**; confirmation that your message has been cancelled will be displayed.

People and Places

Sylvia McConnell

is taking on the position of program support coordinator in the Developmental Services Branch. Sylvia comes from Financial Planning and Corporate Analysis Branch, where she was a senior policy analyst with responsibility for the developmental services portfolio. Her telephone line is 416-327-4953; please also note that Reception can now be reached at 325-5151, and that the branch fax is 325-5544.



Sylvia McConnell

Joining the ministry's Native Affairs

Secretariat as a policy analyst is Elizabeth Shaw.

She joins us from the Communications Branch of the Ontario Native Affairs Secretariat. She can be reached at 416-325-4849.



Elizabeth Shaw

Our new redeployment co-ordinator is Mary Kurychak, who comes to us from the Ministry of Education and Training;



Mary Kurychak

Janis Fraser will now resume her role as human resources co-ordinator full time.

Barbara Kane has accepted a new position as a senior policy analyst with the Violence

Prevention Secretariat, which is part of the Ministry of Education and Training. Barbara had been a policy analyst with our Children's Services Branch.

Eva Allmen is taking early retirement from the Community Services Unit after 15 years with the ministry. She was a policy analyst with the unit.

Lorraine Young has joined the Hamilton Area Office as a program supervisor. She came to Queen's Park in August 1992 to work on the Operations Division Organization Review Project, which later became the ministry restructuring. Prior to that, she had been with probation services in Mississauga.

In the June issue, the clown in the story "They're not just clowning around" was actually "Sammy," also known as Susan Munier of Huronia; the resident was Ildeko Czecko.

At Information Systems Branch (ISB), Nancy Anderson has been seconded to the Waterloo Area Office as planning officer. Donna Ingram will take over Nancy's previous responsibilities to become the manager of the Social Assistance and Employment Unit. Tom Enright will take on Donna's previous role as manager of the Ministry-Wide Systems, as well as the Community Systems Group, with the objective of merging these units by the fall.

Debbie Moretta is leaving her position as manager of implementation planning for the Social Assistance Reform Project to take on a secondment with the Mississauga Area Office. She will be the manager of the Child Care Branch.

A fond farewell was bid in June to Jim Macneven, who retired from the ministry after 26 years. Jim retired from the position of community services manager in the Peterborough Area Office.

The Northwest Area office in Thunder Bay bid farewell to executive assistant Joan Nishimura and area manager Doug Hayman in June. Joan had decided on an early retirement and Doug, as previously announced, has been transferred to the Hamilton Area Office as area manager.



Reducing Spending

Financial and Administrative Services Branch, the people who keep track of our spending, reports that MCSS has been very successful in reducing discretionary spending during this time of constraint. Here's how our spending for the fiscal year from Apr. 1, 1993, to Mar. 31, 1994, compares to the same period a year ago (1992/93):

- consulting services: down 32 per cent
- ministry functions: down 30 per cent
- regular business travel (in Ontario): down 16 per cent
- travel out of province, out of Canada: down 59 per cent
- information technology: down 65 per cent
- office furniture: down 89 per cent
- office and computer supplies: down 5 per cent
- courier services: down 7 per cent
- vehicles: down 69 per cent

Total Other Direct Operating Expenses (ODOE): down 16 per cent

dialogue

Ontario Community and Social Services

Dialogue is published 10 times a year by the Communications and Marketing Branch of the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) to provide an information forum for all employees of the ministry. The opinions expressed are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect ministry or government policy.

Michael Karu
Director, Communications and Marketing Branch

Julia Naczynski
Editor

Debbie Adamson
Creative Services

Please send story ideas, articles, photographs and news items about people and events, with your telephone number, to:

The Editor, DIALOGUE
Communications & Marketing Branch
MCSS
7th floor, Hepburn Block
QUEEN'S PARK ON. M7A 1E3

Tel.: (416) 325-5168
Fax: (416) 325-5172
or email the editor at NACZNSKJ

Next issue: September 1994
Submissions deadline: August 1993